



# *Washington State Dept. of Agriculture Organic Program*

## *Certification Fact Sheet*

### **Wild Crop Production**

The USDA organic regulations include requirements for cultivated crops and wild crops. The federal standards (7CFR 205.207) define a wild crop as any plant or portion of a plant that is collected or harvested from a site that is not maintained under cultivation or other agricultural management. Wild crops must also be harvested in a manner that ensures harvesting or gathering will not be destructive to the environment and will sustain the growth and production of the wild crop.

#### **What is a wild crop?**

The series of questions on the second page of this factsheet can be used to determine whether or not your crop qualifies as a wild crop or a cultivated crop. All operations with wild crops must complete a Crop Producer Organic System Plan and with details about wild harvest practices in the applicable section.

#### **What are the additional requirements for wild crops?**

Practices related to your wild crops must be outlined in your organic system plan; this includes a description of the natural environment and any rare or endangered species within your harvest area, as well as a description of your harvesting methods and how you ensure the crop is harvested in a sustainable manner.

Wild crops must be harvested from a site distinct from where cultivated crops are harvested. You must submit a full map of the area(s) to be harvested, defining boundaries, borders, adequate buffer zones, and point and non-point sources of contaminants.

#### **How will my operation be evaluated?**

When available, established industry standards will be used as a guide to determine the best harvest practices for a particular wild crop. Inspection of the wild harvest crops must be conducted annually, preferably during the harvest of the wild crop. Each year, your inspector will ensure your management practices of the wild crop harvest area continue to qualify as wild crop harvesting according to the USDA organic regulations.



# Does Your Site Qualify for Wild Harvest?

Answer the following questions to determine if your production practices are considered wild crop harvesting or cultivated crop production per USDA organic regulations.

1. Is the land an abandoned lot (not a natural area) or slated for clearing?
2. Are practices implemented to mimic a natural system, such as the use of shade cloth?
3. Are pest control, disease control, or fertility inputs applied to the land where the crop is harvested?
4. Is the land irrigated where crops are harvested?
5. Are domestic livestock pastured on the area where the crop is harvested?
6. Do you plant seeds (other than re-seeding from existing plants) or use planting stock to re-seed land where the crop is harvested?
7. Is soil cultivated or otherwise disturbed beyond what is necessary for harvest activities where crops are harvested?
8. Is vegetation surrounding crops trimmed or maintained; or are crops pruned at any point throughout the year—excluding what is necessary to sustain the crop and its habitat?

If you answered **Yes** to any of these questions then the crop is considered a cultivated crop and **does not** qualify as a wild crop.

## Additional Resources

Washington State Department of Agriculture Organic Program

Phone: 360-902-1805 | E-mail: [organic@agr.wa.gov](mailto:organic@agr.wa.gov)

Website: <http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Organic/>

USDA National Organic Program (NOP) and links to the USDA organic regulations

Phone: 202-720-3252

Website: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop>

NOP Guide for Organic Crop Producers

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5101542>

NOP Guidance—Wild Crop Harvesting (NOP 5022)

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/5022.pdf>

